



State of Arizona
Department of Education

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Original Signed

MEMORANDUM

TO: At-Risk Afterschool Program Organizations that use USDA Commodities

FROM: Mary Szafranski, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health and Nutrition Services

Melissa Conner, Director
Arizona Department of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program

DATE: September 22, 2012

SUBJECT: Results of the USDA Central Valley Meat Investigation

Based on the recent United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) findings of humane treatment violations at a slaughter facility, on August 19, 2012, USDA suspended inspections at the plant. Central Valley Meat (CVM) has been a supplier to the USDA's National School Lunch Program as well as to other commercial food processors.

USDA has purchased beef from the company, but no purchases were made during the investigation and there was **not a recall of CVM products**.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and FSIS work as a team to ensure that products produced for the Federal nutrition assistance programs meet stringent food safety standards and that producers comply with humane handling regulations.

USDA food safety regulations state that, if an animal is non-ambulatory disabled at any time prior to slaughter, i.e., a "downer," it must be promptly and humanely euthanized, and properly discarded so that it does not enter the food supply. Preliminary findings indicated that proper procedures were followed regarding non-ambulatory animal regulations.

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USDA FSIS Administrator Al Almanza states that, “Our top priority is to ensure the safety of the food Americans feed their families.” FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled, and also works to ensure industry’s compliance with poultry good commercial practices and with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA), which requires that livestock be handled and slaughtered in a humane way.

The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) Food Safety and Inspection Service’s (FSIS) investigation has concluded that there is no evidence to support the allegation that a downer cow was slaughtered and entered the food supply, and that a food safety violation occurred as a result. In addition, FSIS has concluded its evaluation of the extensive corrective action plan submitted by Central Valley Meat Company to correct recent humane handling violations and has permitted Central Valley Meat to resume processing. As a result, the company will resume packing and shipping existing meat orders purchased by USDA for the National School Lunch Program.

Please feel free to contact your specialist if you have questions

